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Missouri receives 'Staying Connected' grant from Gates Foundation

Secretary of State Robin Carnahan recently announced Missouri has received \$429,433 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. As one of 37 states receiving a Staying Connected Challenge Grant, Missouri will use the funds to improve technology training for library staff and patrons, replace older workstations, upgrade software, and increase access to technical support.

"Missouri's public libraries provide invaluable services and access to resources for people of all ages and in every corner of our state," said Carnahan. "Our public libraries are no longer just repositories for books, they are community centers that connect people, businesses, and information together like never before. Libraries are vital links for our communities to the world and to our future. They must be protected and supported, and I am very pleased that we have been selected by the Gates Foundation to receive this grant."

This is the third time Missouri has received a grant from the Gates Foundation, and this funding continues to support essential technology services in the state's public libraries. Back when the original grant placed new computers across the state, Texas County Library patrons would wait in line for them instead of using available older computers. The speed of the new computers, combined with the software they offered, made them worth waiting for. Now the library uses the computers for basic computer classes where the average class participant is 70 years old. The quality of the Gates equipment not only attracted a wide variety of patrons, but also convinced local community partners in the county to upgrade the other public access computers in all four branches.

"Gates opened up many patrons' minds to what would be available at the library," said Texas County Library Director Brenda Bates. "People in the community now support the use of library funds for computers."

Over the next three years, Staying Connected grant funds will be targeted to public libraries identified by the Gates Foundation and the State Library as being in areas of persistent poverty and greatest financial need. Libraries in those areas can apply for funding to replace or upgrade old computers, and as a condition of the grant they will provide matching funds and participate in technology training to help them maintain the new equipment. The State Library estimates 50 library systems will receive approximately 200 computers over the course of the grant program.

Another portion of the Gates grant will increase the technical support available to public libraries. Libraries with high incidences of security problems and other technical support issues can apply to receive a network audit to analyze vulnerabilities. Technical support for computer upgrades, software needs, and other computer troubleshooting will also be available.

The State Library will also use the grant to offer technology-related training to public library staff members. Courses offered at no charge to public library staff will include technology planning, networking, PC hardware, Web page design, and basic computer skills for novice users.

The Secretary of State's Office and the Missouri State Library are committed to supporting high-quality public access computing in the state, and already use state and federal funding to provide Internet access, computer equipment, and technology training to public libraries in Missouri. This new grant will help the agency to continue to reach out to those libraries most in need and help them provide these services to their patrons.

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Missouri libraries receive LSTA grants

Over the past few months the Secretary of State's Office awarded nine new Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) grants for computer labs, digital imaging projects, and training and professional development programming, totaling \$198,626.

COMPUTER TRAINING LABORATORIES

Webb City Public Library

\$30,783

In conjunction with a major library renovation, the Webb City Public Library will use LSTA funds to incorporate a mobile computer lab they can use for staff and patron training.

St. Louis County Library

\$47,541

The St. Louis County Library system will use the grant funding to put training labs in the Indian Trails and Cliff Cave branches. This is the second time St. Louis County has received a computer training lab grant, and the two new facilities will serve 131,513 people.

Jefferson County Library

\$29,074

Jefferson County's new Arnold branch was built with space for a computer training facility, and with this grant they will partner with Jefferson College to offer GED courses and teach computer courses to the public.

Rolling Hills Consolidated Library

\$28,375

Rolling Hills will use grant funds to install a mobile computer lab in the remodeled St. Joseph branch, but the library plans on also using it at the Savannah branch as well. A portable system will provide the most cost effective way for the library to serve patrons at both locations.

DIGITAL IMAGING

University City Public Library

\$12,790

"University City, Missouri – A History in Documents" will complement University City's original digital imaging project by presenting documents related to the American Women's League and the American Women's Republic, both active between 1904 and 1912.

Washington University - Becker Medical Library

\$11,329

"Deafness in Disguise: Retrospective Metadata" digitizes photographs of mechanical and electrical hearing devices from the 19th through 21st centuries. Other documents include advertisements, brochures, trade catalogs, and illustrations.

Missouri Western State College

\$6,167

"Constance Faunt Le Roy Runcie Collection" is the second phase of the digitization project focusing on the life and creative activity of one of Missouri's prominent women writers. This phase will add short stories, plays, music, and art to the online exhibit.

Hannibal Free Public Library

\$4,500

"Immigrants to Northeast Missouri" features photographs of the people, school, work and churches of Ilasco, a company town owned by the Atlas Portland Cement Company in northeast Missouri. The project depicts the life of a community made up of immigrants from Romania, Slovakia, Italy and Hungary in the early and mid-twentieth century.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Columbia School District

\$28,067

Funds will train school library media specialists from the Columbia Public School District to collaborate and team teach with the "enhancing Missouri's Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies" (eMINTS) classroom teachers. The eMINTS program focuses on making effective use of technology, and this project will involve training for library media specialists and teachers from ten schools across Missouri. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is co-sponsoring the project.

State library provides vulnerability audits

Network and computer security violations can cost thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours to repair. The State Library wants to help Missouri's public libraries prevent these costly problems and is pleased to provide remote vulnerability audits to 26 libraries over the coming year.

MOREnet will perform the audits as part of the State Library's Gates Foundation Staying Connected grant initiative. MOREnet will analyze the libraries' computer security systems to see where they might be exposed to hackers, viruses, and other threats. If problems are found, libraries will receive suggestions on how to best protect their networks. Audit reports will contain suggestions for training, technical resources, and hardware/software improvements.

Over the next three years the State Library will continue offering audits to other libraries around the state. Libraries receiving audits this year are:

Barton County Library
Cass County Public Library
Cedar County Public Library
Christian County Library
Dulany Memorial Library, Salisbury
Dunklin County Library
Hannibal Free Public Library
Hickory County Library
Joplin Public Library
Keller Public Library
Little Dixie Regional Library
Mexico-Audrain County Library
Neosho-Newton County Library
Northeast Missouri Library Service
Oregon County Library
Oregon Public Library
Poplar Bluff Public Library
Pulaski County Library
Ray County Library
Riverside Regional Library
Scenic Regional Library
Sikeston Public Library
Springfield-Greene County Library
Texas County Public Library
University City Public Library
Wright County Library

Summer reading program promotes 'joust' reading

"Dragons, Dreams, and Daring Deeds" and "Joust Read" will inspire children and teens as the themes for reading programs offered in public and school libraries across the state this summer. Sponsored by the State Library, the handbooks and promotional items were distributed to libraries in mid-November so library staff will have plenty of time to develop their programs.

Manuals for both programs are filled with ideas for medieval magic and merriment, and the State Library held training sessions across the state to cover the manual content and help librarians with specific ideas to get their young patrons to read during the summer.

For additional information on summer reading content and training sessions, consult the Youth Services page of the State Library's Web site, www.sos.mo.gov/library/development/services/youth_srs.asp.



Online bibliography covers current events

As a response to the events on September 11, 2001, the Association of American University Presses created a free electronic bibliography program called Books for Understanding. The bibliography was intended to direct teachers, journalists, librarians, and others to needed research and information about the background of those events. Since that time, the bibliography has expanded and is now an ongoing project to identify university press books relevant to the news of the day.

Books for Understanding is available at <http://aaupnet.org/booksforunderstanding.html>.



Web Watch

Access Middle East

www.AccessMiddleEast.org

Breaking news about the Middle East, linking users to a wide variety of sources for information. The site also offers background information on major regional issues, media and quotes archives, and much more.

DNA of Literature

www.parisreview.org/literature.php

Part of the online version of *The Paris Review*, this site collects over 50 years of literary wisdom with more than 300 interviews with writers ranging from E.M. Forster to Lorrie Moore.

The Tornado Project Online

www.tornadoproject.com

Learn about recent and past tornados, locate answers to commonly asked questions, and make sense of tornado myths.

Missouri exhibits at National Book Festival

Missouri joined other state library organizations under the Pavilion of the States at the 2004 National Book Festival in Washington, D.C. on October 9, 2004. Attended by an estimated 85,000 people, the National Book Festival brings together authors and the public for a daylong celebration of books and literacy.

It was nonstop action at the Pavilion of the States, where children could go from booth to booth and collect stickers or stamps on a map listing a book from every

state. Missouri chose *Shakespeare Stealer*, by Carthage author Gary Blackwood. Most of the day was spent stamping maps and encouraging participants to read it and other great books by Missouri authors.

The State Library also offered 15 different bookmarks featuring Missouri authors, literacy promotion, and archival document protection tips. Other brochures and flyers highlighted Missouri's literary history and library services. Display copies of state "one book" reading selections, Wolfner print-braille picture books, and copies of the Missouri Heritage Readers Series from the University of Missouri Press were also available.

Gabe Shapiro, vice president of the Missouri Center for the Book, Wicky Sleight, director of the Kirkwood Public Library, and Holly Dentner, library development consultant and coordinator of

the Missouri Center for the Book, represented Missouri at the festival. Cybercasts of the festival's author readings and other events are available at www.loc.gov/bookfest/.



The 2004 National Book Festival poster, designed by illustrator Floyd Cooper.

Bosnian coloring book and state symbols guide released

State Librarian Sara Parker presented two new Bosnian/English documents at the St. Louis Public Library on November 29, 2004. The side-by-side translated booklets are part of the Bosnian outreach project developed by the Secretary of State's Office through a generous donation from Verizon Wireless.

The new booklets focus on Missouri's state symbols, one featuring photos and descriptions of the symbols and the other designed as a coloring book for children. Both contain text printed in English and Bosnian to help those in the Bosnian immigrant community improve their English skills.

Other translated documents developed through the outreach project focus on starting a business, investments and securities, registering to vote, and state government structure and functions.

Wolfner patrons read 42 books per year

A recently compiled annual report to the National Library Service showed some compelling data about the Wolfner Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped:

- Wolfner had 11,857 registered accounts, a 3.4 percent increase from last year.
- The number of patrons subscribing to Wolfner-circulated magazines increased from 868 in June 2003 to 1,008 in October 2004, a 13.9 percent increase. The most popular magazines are *Missouri Conservationist*, *Guideposts*, *Capper's Weekly*, and *Reminisce*.
- The Wolfner collection contains 394,120 copies of 69,264 different titles. Those copies circulated 505,918 times during the fiscal year.
- Wolfner patrons are busy readers, with an average of 42.67 books per year for each account.

St. Louis hosts author celebration

Best-selling author Ridley Pearson and six other talented Missouri writers read from their latest works at the annual Celebration of the Book, sponsored by the Missouri Center for the Book, Missouri State Library, and St. Louis Community College. The event was held on November 20 at the Schlafly branch of the St. Louis Public Library.

Margot McMillen and her daughter, Heather Roberson, started the day by discussing their newest book from the University of Missouri Press, *Into the Spotlight: Four Missouri Women*. Valerie Vogrin and Sharon Shinn delighted the audience with readings from their novels, Richard Newman read his poetry and talked about the creative writing process, and Jodie Lynn discussed her nationally syndicated newspaper column. Center for the Book board member Mark Tiedemann read several short stories, and Ridley Pearson talked about his collaboration with Dave Barry for *Peter and the Starcatchers*.

Watch the Missouri Center for the Book Web site, <http://books.missouri.org>, for upcoming author readings and other celebrations across the state.



Pearson reads from his new book, *Peter and the Starcatchers*.

New children's book list counters negative stereotypes of elderly

Faced with research showing that a majority of American children hold negative views about the elderly, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) has teamed with George Washington University's Center on Aging, Health and Humanities to develop a reading list of children's books that counter negative stereotypes about aging and the elderly.

ALSC compiled the new list, which was then evaluated by more than 200 librarians, specialists, and consumers of various ages. The 91 titles, published as recently as 2002 and as far back as 1976, are geared for children pre-kindergarten through grade 6.

The book list was developed in response to a study by the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) and the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA) that showed most children hold a negative view of the elderly, despite having positive feelings toward older persons in their own families. The book list and additional information and research is available at www.gwumc.edu/cahh/booklist/.

Celebrate National Poetry Month

In April the Academy of American Poets will celebrate the 10th annual National Poetry Month, a program the Academy established in 1996 to rally Americans to a greater appreciation of contemporary poetry. This year the Academy wants to increase the visibility, presence, and accessibility of poetry by promoting the creation of poetry book clubs across the country. Their Web site, www.poets.org/npm, will feature free readers guides, profiles of existing poetry reading groups, how-to suggestions for starting a poetry club, and reading recommendations from leading poets.

New brochure available for Children's Day/Book Day

The Association for Library Service to Children has posted online information on celebrating El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day), which is celebrated annually on April 30. The celebration emphasizes the importance of advocating literacy for every child, regardless of linguistic and cultural background.

The online information features a book list by and about Latinos, tips for librarians, tips for parents, and other web resources, and everything is available in both English and Spanish.

Further information about the day, including suggestions for hosting a celebration in your library, is available at www.ala.org/alsc.

Nature is a haunted house —
but Art — is a house that tries to be haunted.

Emily Dickinson



Missouri Library News

Local philanthropist leaves \$1 million to Poplar Bluff library

As Director Jackie Thomas made her way to the 2004 MLA Conference, she had no idea the library had been included in a \$9 million bequest from Poplar Bluff resident Kay Porter. A cell phone call from her board treasurer revealed the library would receive \$1 million from Porter's estate.

This is the first time the library has received such a significant bequest, and it comes to the library with no strings attached. The library, local school district, police and fire departments, and the community college all received a portion of Porter's estate.

No decisions have been made by the library board on how to use the money. Thomas said one possibility would be to renovate the children's area of the library, as it was not addressed when the library expanded in 1998. She says the library is grateful for such a wonderful gift, and will carefully consider the best use of the funds before making a decision.

St. Louis Library one of the 'most beautiful'

Featured with libraries from Austria, Croatia, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the St. Louis Public Library was selected to appear in the 2005 Renaissance Library Calendar. St. Louis's downtown Central Library is one of only three U.S. libraries featured in the calendar, which showcases the most beautiful and historical libraries in the world. Librarians, information professionals, and book lovers in more than 40 countries chose the winners for the calendar, now in its fifth year of publication.

Central Library was designed in the

beaux-arts neo-Italian Renaissance style, and construction began in 1907 with philanthropist Andrew Carnegie's \$1 million gift. The Library opened to the public in 1912. The calendar contains a photograph of the library's Great Hall for the month of May. Visit the calendar's Web site at www.renaissancecelibrary.com to view selected images.

Kansas City library receives various honors

The Kansas City Public Library finished renovations on the historic downtown library location earlier this year, and has been honored by several organizations for the results.

The Central Library was one of 22 award winners honored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation during its 2004 National Preservation Conference. The library won the National Preservation Honor Award for transforming the vacant First National Bank building into a functioning, first class library with an art gallery, café, rooftop garden, and theater.

"The renovation of the Kansas City Central Library serves as a model for the restoration of other historic urban properties," said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust. "This project is a leader in the rejuvenation of downtown Kansas City."

The Urban Land Institute of Kansas City agrees, naming the library the winner of its 2004 Adaptive Re-Use Award. *The Pitch*, a news and entertainment weekly, included the library in its "Best of Kansas City 2004" by naming it "the best place to get carded."

Vandalia library expands

Expansion means 2,000 more square feet for the Vandalia Branch Library, part of the Mexico-Audrain County Library District. The library had previously leased only the top floor of their building, but now leases the entire structure from the city. The basement of the building is now the children's area, and renovations included new carpet, paint, shelving, and other items necessary to make the building ADA compliant.

Renovation costs were approximately \$25,000, with a local donor contributing \$20,000. An open house to show off the new children's area was held on November 4, 2004.

Webster Groves library joins St. Louis consortium

Webster Groves Public Library officially joined the St. Louis Municipal Library Consortium in July, and is now fully integrated with the consortium's catalog and computer system. Eight other libraries in the St. Louis area make up the consortium, giving patrons access to over 600,000 volumes.

Acting library co-director Elise Fortman said the library decided to join the consortium when faced with an obsolete automation system. After considering their options, the library board found the consortium the best choice for the library. While the library officially joined in July, the system was not fully functional until mid-December. Fortman says patrons are enjoying the benefits, and even though library employees are still adjusting to the change, staff and customers are pleased with the results.

Libri Foundation awards grants to Missouri libraries

Seven Missouri libraries received grant funds from the Libri Foundation to purchase children's books in 2004. The Libri Foundation helps rural libraries acquire new hardcover children's books they could otherwise not afford to buy.

To encourage and reward local support, the foundation matches any amount of money raised by a library's local sponsors on a 2-to-1 ratio. Librarians select books from a list provided by the foundation, containing over 700 fiction and nonfiction titles targeted for children ages 12 and under.

Grants are awarded three times a year, with application deadlines in March, July, and December. Visit the Libri Foundation Web site, www.librifoundation.org, for application information.

2004 Missouri recipients include Bonne

Terre Memorial Library, Fairview Community Library, Latham R-V Library, the Mary K. Finley branch of the Barton County Library, Ray County Library in Richmond, Sullivan County Library in Milan, and Wright County Library in Hartville.

New Boonslick branch opens in Cole Camp

Former resident and *Fortune Magazine* editor-at-large Carol Junge Loomis cut the ribbon at the December 4 dedication ceremony for the new library in Cole Camp. Loomis and her mother, Mildred Junge, contributed \$500,000 toward the new library's construction as part of a lifelong dream to provide a library for the community. The Junge Memorial Library serves as a branch of the Boonslick Regional Library, and doubles the space of the previous library building.

The entire project cost approximately \$600,000. The land for the library was also donated, and the Friends Group raised money for interior furnishings. About 100 volunteers helped move the branch from its old location.

Schlafly branch receives ALA Jewish literature grant

The American Library Association recently selected 35 libraries to receive grants for "Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature" programs, and one grant will go to the Schlafly branch of the St. Louis Public Library.

The "Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature" program features scholar-led, theme-based discussions that explore the best in contemporary and classic Jewish literature. Libraries selected for the project are required to promote and present a five-part discussion series based on one of four themes. Each series features discussion programs led by a local scholar. Selected libraries will receive training for the library's project director, program and promotional materials, and a \$1,500 grant to support workshop travel, program costs, and scholar honoraria.

Help for historic libraries

Like other public buildings in the state, many Missouri libraries are located in historic buildings. Maintaining the historical integrity of a structure with lots of visitors can be difficult and expensive. The Minnesota Historical Society created a 39-page *Historic Housekeeping Handbook* to offer valuable advice for cleaning historic buildings and keeping them architecturally sound. The handbook is available online at the Society's Web site, www.mnhs.org/preserve/conservation. Look for "Housekeeping Manual" at the bottom of the page, under the "Additional Information" section.

Other useful information in the handbook includes suppliers of conservation-related products and links to other related organizations.

More Library News



BookBuzz celebrates birthday

Newsbee, the mascot for the *Washington Missourian's* popular Book Buzz column, made his debut live appearance at parties held in his honor on November 14 in Washington and Union. Thanks to an anonymous donation earmarked for a mascot costume, Newsbee will now appear at schools, parades, and other Book Buzz events.

The Book Buzz program started two years ago and has won top awards in state and national press association contests. Each month, three books at different reading levels are profiled in the column, and children are encouraged to read the books and submit reviews. One review for each book is published in the newspaper.

The column is so popular with the community that businesses and community organizations have donated more than \$40,000 worth of free books to area schools and libraries. The column is also available at no charge to newspapers across the country through the Missouri Press Association. Ten newspapers in Missouri carry the column, plus one in Illinois and two in Maryland.

Book Buzz coordinators Chris Stuckenschneider and Dawn Kitchell presented a Book Buzz session at the MLA conference in October, and encourage library directors and staff to start the buzz in their own com-

munities. Sample columns, contact information, and tips for creating a book buzz program are available in the Newspapers in Education section of the Missouri Press Association Web site, www.mopress.com.

Library receives grant to improve early childhood literacy programs

The Springfield-Greene County Library is part of a consortium of children's services agencies receiving a \$700,000 federal grant from the Department of Health and Senior Services. Of that amount, the library will receive more than \$100,000 to expand library services to day care centers and Head Starts during the next year.

The goal of the grant is to improve early childhood literacy programs in the Springfield area. While the library has been serving home day care centers for several years, the grant will expand the program significantly. Funds will allow for the addition of three part time staff, additional rotating collections, the purchase of incentives for children, and the production of informational brochures.

The library also plans to establish cooperative projects with a local mental health care center and train their youth services staff in developmental issues.

Poplar Bluff starts 'Rotary Hour' job training

A new program at the Poplar Bluff Library gives anyone who needs job training assistance a chance to meet with a local Rotary Club member for advice. Every Thursday at 3 p.m., Rotary Hour pairs a volunteer Rotarian with job seekers who need help with their efforts. Rotary club members volunteer their time at the library as part of a community service effort that started with a \$5,000 donation for public access computers.

During Rotary Hour, patrons can have one-on-one conversations with Rotarians, to help them complete job applications, use job-seeking Web sites, develop a resume, or address any other job search strategies.



Newsbee looks over author Chuck Wilcoxon's shoulder as he reads during the birthday celebration at Washington Public Library. (*Washington Missourian* photo)

Remodeled Carnegie library opens in Fulton

Callaway County Public Library, part of the Daniel Boone Regional Library, recently completed an \$800,000 remodeling project to make their 1912 Carnegie library a more inviting, user-friendly building for their patrons.

The most noticeable change is the new, more convenient entrance on the lower level, which now serves as the main entrance to the library.

Natural light fills the upper level, where construction workers raised the ceilings and exposed the tops of the windows in the original Carnegie section. Better lighting was installed throughout the library, as well as new chairs and furnishings. All new fixtures in the restrooms, a new staircase, and repairs to the heating and cooling system round out the extensive updating process.

The project began in 2002 with work on the outside of the building, and the library was temporarily relocated for nine months while construction took place. The library reopened on November 10, 2004.

Student art decorates ceiling at Centralia

Staff at the Centralia Public Library needed a way to give their teenage patrons a sense of ownership for the young adult area of the library. They decided to take down 16 ceiling tiles from the area and sent them to the high school art department so students could paint them.

The library wasn't looking for any specific design and didn't want a mural, and the students stepped up to the challenge. They took the job very seriously and worked hard to paint the tiles with colorful, abstract designs. When the tiles were finished the Centralia high school principal and art teacher joined the students at the library to see the result. Even though there was no pre-arranged order for the tiles, the students carefully arranged them on the ceiling.

The project exceeded expectations and patrons have been so receptive to the artwork that the library is considering asking next year's art students to paint more tiles, possibly using classic book characters for the children's section.

First female U.S. poet laureate dies

Mona Van Duyn, the nation's first female poet laureate, died of bone cancer on December 2, 2004, at her home in University City, Missouri. She was 83.

Van Duyn received a master's degree from the University of Iowa in 1943, the same year she married fellow writer Jarvis Thurston. Both moved to St. Louis in 1950, where Van Duyn became a long-time faculty member of Washington University. She was named U.S. Poet Laureate in 1992. Among her many awards are the Bollingen Prize in Poetry, the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize for *Near Changes*, and election to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Van Duyn and Thurston founded *Perspective: A Quarterly of Literature*.

Poems by Van Duyn and additional biographical information can be found on the Academy of American Poets Web site, www.poets.org.



The new main entrance for the Callaway Co. Library. (Daniel Boone Regional Library photo)



Personal Notes

newsline welcomes information for "Missouri Library News" and "Personal Notes" from librarians, library trustees, and others interested in the state's libraries. Send news about library events, projects, awards, and personnel changes to the editor. (See page 2 for contact information.)

Appointments:

Stacy Coulsell has been appointed Hickory County Library manager, a position that combines the duties once separated into library manager and library administrator. Coulsell replaces Sharon Barrett, who retired in August after nine years as library administrator.

Crosby Kemper III, Kansas City civic leader and former CEO of UMB Bank and UMB Financial Corp., has been selected as interim executive director of the Kansas City Public Library. He succeeds Roger Pearson, who served as interim director since May 2004. Kansas City library trustees cite Kemper's combination of business skills, personal commitment, and civic involvement as an important contribution to the success of the library.

Gwen L. Williams has been named reference librarian at the University of Missouri – Kansas City libraries. Williams' duties will be related to supporting the libraries' digital initiatives, and for providing collections and information literacy instruction for the English and theatre programs. Williams earned her master's degree in library and information science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, her master's degree in English, and her Bachelor of Science degree in management at Illinois State University. She brings library and teaching experience from both of those universities and is a published poet and fiction writer.

Awards and Honors:

Annie Busch, director of the Springfield-Greene County Library District, received one of 20 "Most Influential Women" awards from the Springfield Business Journal in

October. Busch has been director of the library district since 1990, and was selected for her direction of the district, including creating two "state-of-the-art super libraries" and her efforts to provide the latest in computer technology at all the district's branches.

Chrystal Elwood, youth services manager for the Cass County Public Library, was named Outstanding Employee of the Year by the Missouri Library Association at the 2004 annual conference. The award recognizes a library employee who made a significant contribution to the improvement of the library.

Helma Hawkins, youth services coordinator at the Kansas City Public Library, was honored with the Dr. Seuss Award for Community Volunteer of the Year at a recent ceremony for the Reach Out and Read Kansas City program. Reach Out and Read is run by the Kansas City medical community to increase children's reading abilities.

Julie Schwartz, a library assistant at Kirkwood Public Library, has been appointed to the 2006 Randolph Caldecott Award committee. Schwartz is working on her master's degree at the University of Missouri and has worked at the library for two years.

Susan Singleton received the 2004 Ronald G. Bohley award, presented at the 2004 Missouri Library Association Conference in St. Louis. Singleton served as executive director of MLNC for ten years, and helped develop the Show Me the World project, Virtually Missouri, and worked to establish statewide relationships and collaboration among libraries.

Retirements:

Catherine Ponder, branch manager of the Heartland Library facility in Iberia, has retired. Ponder retired exactly ten years to the day she started working at the library, when it opened on September 18, 1994.

Loyce Reed, library director at the Keller Public Library in Dexter, has retired. Reed started working at the library in 1960, and became director in 1979. A retirement reception for Reed was held at the library on November 24.

Sue Reed, supervisor at the Pacific branch of the Scenic Regional Library, has retired after 40 years of service. Over 50 community members gathered to honor her work at the library during a celebration held on September 30. Reed received a proclamation from the library and a lifetime mem-

bership to the local historical society in honor of her contributions to the library.

Deaths:

Helen Henton, former librarian at the Carnegie Public Library in Albany, died November 15, 2004. Henton served as librarian for 33 years and was noted for her dedication to helping families retrieve information from the genealogical resources in the area.

Community reading projects continue across the state

The popularity of community-wide reading projects continues across the state, as Columbia and Kansas City finish their 2004 programs and the St. Louis project announces its 2005 selection.

Betsey Brown, by former St. Louis resident Ntozake Shange, will be the 2005 ReadMOre selection for the St. Louis area program. At the Missouri Library Association conference in October, Kirkwood Public Library Director Wicky Sleight encouraged librarians across the state to get involved with the project, in an effort to extend the boundaries of the program beyond the St. Louis area. Shange's publisher has confirmed she will come to Missouri in April to discuss the novel, and other book discussions and events are in the planning stages.

Columbia's OneRead program, sponsored by Daniel Boone Regional Library and a variety of local community agencies, selected Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed*. The book was also required reading for freshman classes at the University of Missouri – Columbia and Stephens College. OneRead events ranged from panel discussions on the issues raised in the book to the airing of the movie *9 to 5*. Stephens College students presented a dramatic reading from the book, and the project culminated with a special discussion and book signing by Ehrenreich in September. OneRead organizers are already evaluating the community's nominations for the 2005 selection, which will be announced in the summer.

The Kansas City area program, United We Read, chose *The Speed of Dark*, by Elizabeth Moon, as the 2004 selection. Libraries in the area scheduled book discussions and events during the fall, and Moon attended several events in November to discuss the book with fans.

The Library of Congress tracks one-book projects across the country, providing links to programs by state and other tools for forming one-book programs. To see what other states are reading, or to look for ideas on how to start a one-book program, go to www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/one-book.html.

Nebraskan named poet laureate

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington announced the appointment of Ted Kooser as the 13th poet laureate consultant to the Library of Congress. Kooser started his duties in the fall, opening the Library of Congress's annual literary series and appearing at the National Book Festival poetry pavilion.

On making the appointment, Billington said, "Ted Kooser is a major poetic voice for rural and small town America and the first poet laureate chosen from the Great Plains. His verse reaches beyond his native region to touch on universal themes in accessible ways."

Kooser is the author of ten collections of poetry. He was born in Ames, Iowa in 1939 and is currently a visiting professor in the English department of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He succeeds Louise Glück.

For more details about the laureateship, go to the Library of Congress Web site, www.loc.gov/poetry.



Teens vote for favorite young adult book

Teen readers across the country voted *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* as their favorite book in the annual Teens' Top Ten, sponsored by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). The vote took place during the 2004 Teen Read Week and gave teens an opportunity to voice their choice of the best new young adult books.

Teens were encouraged to vote for their favorite young adult books during Teen Read Week, and over 2,000 online ballots were cast. The online results were combined with the results of a separate vote of the Teens' Top Ten groups, which determined the final ranking of the ten top books of the year, as selected by teen readers.

With Rowling's fifth Harry Potter novel topping the list, the 2004 Teens' Top Ten includes:

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix by J. K. Rowling (Scholastic, 2003)

Eragon by Christopher Paolini (Knopf, 2003)

Pirates! by Celia Rees (Bloomsbury, 2003)

Trickster's Choice by Tamora Pierce (Random House, 2003)

Inkheart by Cornelia Funke (Chicken House/Scholastic, 2003)

A Great and Terrible Beauty by Libba Bray (Delacorte, 2004)

The Goose Girl by Shannon Hale (Bloomsbury, 2003)

Princess in Pink by Meg Cabot (HarperCollins, 2004)

The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things by Carolyn Mackler (Candlewick, 2003)

Curse of the Blue Tattoo by L.A. Meyer (Harcourt, 2004)

For further information on the project, visit YALSA's Teens' Top Ten site, www.ala.org/teenstopten.

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